

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Contact:**

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Food Safety Tips for Graduation Parties

Eau Claire, WI- June 19, 2019- Tis' the season for graduation parties! **Be sure to include food safety as part of your plans.** Events where food is often left out for long periods of time can leave the door open for uninvited guests—bacteria that can make people sick.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each year 17,000 residents in Eau Claire County will become sick from consuming unsafe food. With warmer temperatures, foodborne illness rates increase in the summer. Warmer temperatures can cause the number of bacteria in food to double in as little as 20 minutes!

*"The most important thing to remember to keep your food safe is to **keep hot foods hot** and **cold foods cold**," says Iris Lang, Environmental Health Specialist. See additional tips below.*

Keep hot food hot.

Cooking food on the grill:

- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meat and foods that won't be cooked such as bread, fruit, and summer salads.
- Use a thermometer to check your food temperatures.
- Use clean plates and utensils for cooked meat. Don't use the same utensils that were used for raw meat for other food.
- **Keep hot food hot.** Food can be moved to the side of grill to keep warm until serving

Reheating your food:

- Make sure all foods are reheated to 165° F in two hours.
- Reheat on the stove, in a microwave or nesco roaster.



Keep cold food cold.

Bringing food to a party without a refrigerator:

- Use insulated coolers and fill with ice or ice packs. A full cooler stays cold longer.
- Avoid opening coolers repeatedly.
- Use separate coolers for food and drinks and raw meat.
- **Keep cold food cold.** This includes raw meat, poultry, and seafood, deli meats and sandwiches, summer salads (pasta salad, potato salad, etc.), cut fruits and vegetables, and dairy products.

Making food ahead of time

- We suggest making food the day of your event. If you have to prep it ahead of time, make sure the food is cooled properly after prepping it.

Serving food outdoors:

- Perishable food should not sit out for more than 2 hours or 1 hour if it is 90 degrees or above.
- Refrigerate leftovers quickly. If perishable foods are out longer than the times listed above, throw it out.

Outdoor handwashing:

- Wash your hands often when cooking and handling food, especially in between handling raw meat and ready to eat foods.
- If you don't have access to running water, you can use a water jug, soap, and paper towel. You can also use moist disposable towelettes to clean your hands.

For more information on how to keep your food safe, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/index.html>.

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CHILL LEFTOVERS WITHIN 2 HOURS

- Refrigerate or freeze leftovers in small portions (and in shallow containers).
- Keep leftovers uncovered until it reaches 41° F.